New services by private cell phone operators

*406. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the new services recently introduced by private cell phone operators like Airtel, Hutch, etc. and whether these are causing inconvenience to cell phone users;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these are in accordance with approval from TRAI; and

(d) if not, what action Government are willing to take to curb such practices by private operators?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In terms of the TRAI Act, TRAI is, *inter-alia,* mandated to protect the interest of consumers of telecommunication service. TRAI has intimated that certain Cell Phone consumers have represented that they have been provided Voice Mail Service, which is a value added service, by the Cell Phone Service Providers without their consent. Some consumers had also reported that they faced difficulty in deactivating this service.

(c) Prior approval of TRAI is not necessary for offering Value Added Services by the Cell Phone Service Providers because tariff for cellular services is under forbearance.

(d) TRAI has advised all Cell Phone Service Providers to take subscribers' consent before providing them Voice Mail Service. They were also advised to discontinue this service, if offered, with immediate effect in respect of those subscribers who have not given their consent for it.

Creation of jobs for J&K

*407. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state: